

Preliminary Amendment
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D1
in the tissue or body fluid sample, to produce a complex comprising the binding moiety and the target nucleic acid, wherein the binding moiety binds specifically to a nucleic acid having a sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 47 or a sequence complementary thereto; and

(b) detecting the complex, which if present in the sample is indicative of cervical cancer in the human.

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57. (Amended) The method of claim 55, wherein the nucleic acid is from 8 to 100 nucleotides in length.

REMARKS

At the outset, Applicants wish to thank Examiners Holleran and Caputa for their insightful comments and for the courtesy extended to the undersigned and to Christine McCormack during a telephonic interview that took place on Tuesday, February 5, 2003. The substance of the telephonic interview is incorporated into this paper.

By this Amendment, claims 56, 59, and 60 have been canceled without prejudice, and claims 55 and 57 have been amended. Upon entry of this paper, claims 24, 25, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 57, 58, and 61-63 will be pending in the application.

Claim 55 has been amended to specify that the "binding moiety" is selected from the group consisting of a "nucleic acid and a peptide nucleic acid." Support for this amendment can be found, for example, on page 23, lines 23-24 of the application as filed, and canceled claims 56 and 59. Claim 57 has been amended to correct its dependency in view of the cancellation of claim 56. Applicants believe that the foregoing amendments introduce no new matter.

Applicants respond below to each objection and rejection in the order in which they appear in the October 23, 2001 Office action.